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## Africa Review (U)

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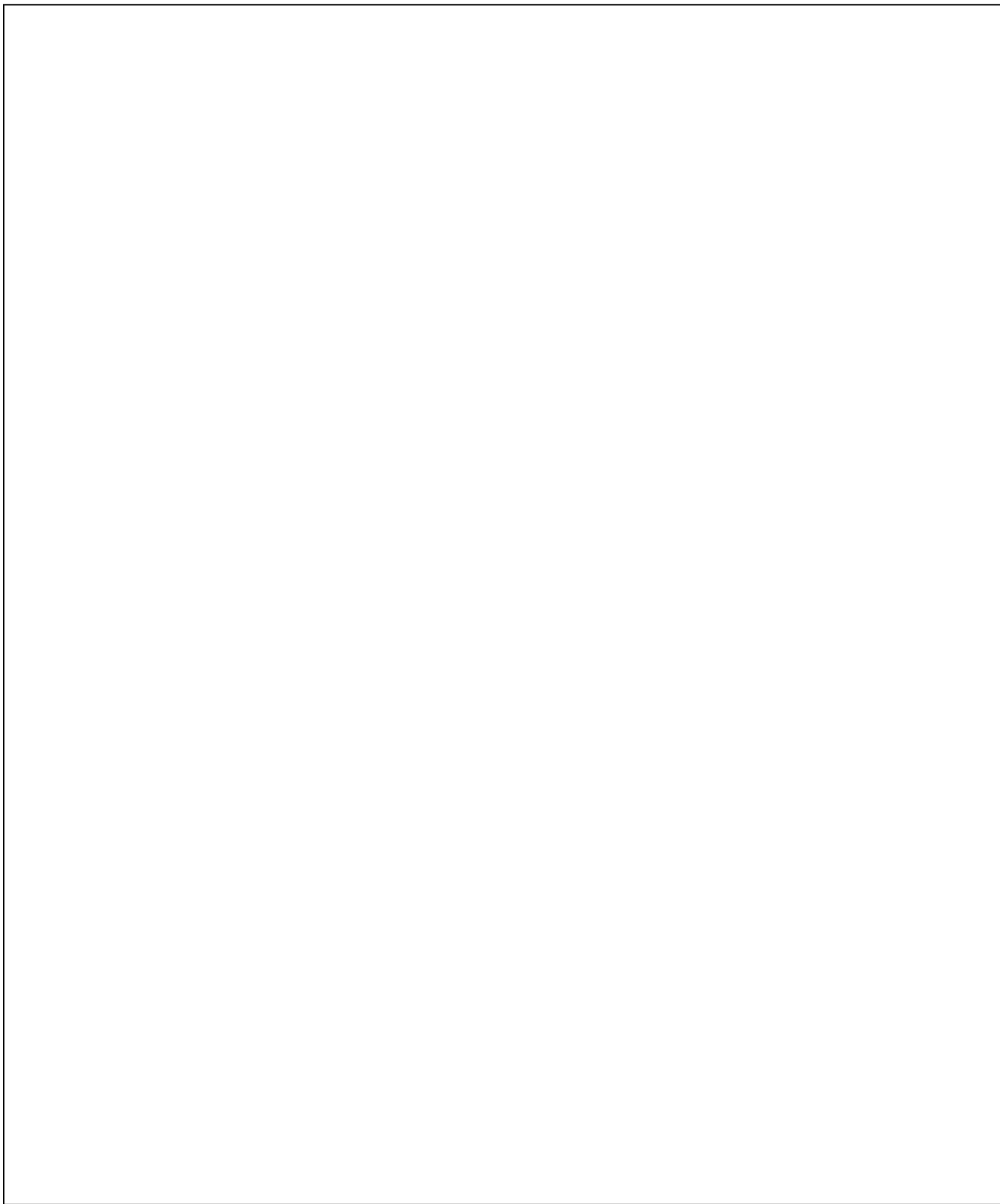
**Uganda: Relations With Neighbors Nosedive**

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President Museveni's increasing fear of an attack from neighboring countries, accompanied by hostile charges levied against Kenya and Rwanda, is a direct result of his mounting domestic problems.

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## Uganda: Relations With Neighbors

### Nosedive

In our judgment President Museveni's increasing fear of an attack from neighboring countries, accompanied by hostile charges levied against Kenya and Rwanda, is a direct result of his own mounting domestic problems. Unable to regain control over his Army, which was shaken late last year after thousands of ethnic Rwandese soldiers deserted to take up arms against Kigali, Museveni's grip on power may be slipping.

Museveni worries that neighboring countries are supporting his domestic opponents or are planning to invade Uganda themselves and set up a puppet regime—an understandable fear since Tanzania installed Obote and the Israelis and British are widely rumored to have put Amin in power.

#### Museveni Stuck on Rwanda Tarbaby . . .

The Tutsi invasion of Rwanda last October generated allegations in the region that Museveni actively supported the rebels. Although Museveni has

repeatedly denied foreknowledge of the invasion or subsequent resupply of rebel forces, Kigali has ridiculed his claims of innocence and argued that rebels repeatedly mount attacks from Ugandan territory. Rhetoric between the capitals continues to be caustic.

The large rebel attack along the northwestern edge of Rwanda's border with Uganda recently has almost certainly renewed Kigali's concern that Museveni is bent on overthrowing President Habyarimana. Museveni argues that he has been wrongfully accused and claims that Kigali is supporting Ugandan rebels. The border situation has become increasingly volatile. Museveni has deployed antiaircraft artillery to the border in response to the persistent violation of Ugandan airspace by Rwandan surveillance aircraft. Shooting down intruding aircraft would prove Kigali's culpability. Several Ugandan villagers have been injured in cross-border attacks by Rwandan military units pursuing rebels, and at least one Rwandan soldier was recently killed after Ugandan Army units returned fire.

#### . . . While Tensions with Kenya Rise

Uganda's relations with Kenya have alternated between civility and belligerence, with Museveni and President Moi each worried that the other supports his opponents. Moreover, Museveni has long believed that Moi and Zaire's President Mobutu are plotting together to destabilize his regime. Museveni's fear has escalated because Kenya and Zaire—the latter sent troops to help Kigali fight its rebels—publicly supported Habyarimana and initially accepted Kigali's claim of a Ugandan conspiracy to overthrow the Rwandan regime. More recently, Museveni claimed that Ugandan rebels, loyal to former President Obote, were planning a massive cross-border attack from Kenya with Nairobi's complicity.

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In recent weeks the verbal mudslinging between Nairobi and Kampala has become more shrill and mutual accusations increasingly serious. Nairobi has denied any hostile intent toward Uganda and accused Museveni of massing troops on the border for offensive, not defensive, purposes. Senior Kenyan officials—taking their lead from Moi—are charging that Kampala, in collaboration with Libya, has been training Kenyan dissidents for subversive operations against Moi. The Kenyan press, moreover, claims that the Ugandan Army plans to invade and annex parts of Kenya in order to satisfy Museveni's territorial ambitions. One recent editorial in a government-sponsored Kenyan newspaper warned Museveni that "If he goes too far, the neighbors will attack Uganda . . . Their patience may be running out." Kampala, for its part, remains steadfast in its original charges that Nairobi is assisting Museveni's opponents, claiming that Nairobi's "hysterical rhetoric only illustrates the mentality of an unbalanced regime."

#### Will Cooler Heads Prevail?

We believe that none of the neighboring countries sees it in their interest to initiate armed hostilities, but Moi and Habyarimana probably will continue to blame Museveni for many of their problems. Such heightened tensions and deep-rooted mistrust may lead to limited border skirmishes between security forces. Museveni has previously issued low-key responses to rhetoric from neighboring leaders and used backchannel communications on "security problems" to defuse bilateral tensions. We are concerned, however, that if he becomes overwhelmed by his domestic problems and has difficulty coping with what he considers are unfounded allegations against him, Museveni will become less than conciliatory. In such circumstances, Museveni might easily perceive certain events—such as the recent movement of Libyan dissidents to Kenya—as further evidence of Nairobi's hostile intentions.

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